

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the captioned patent application. Please cancel claim 3 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 21, wherein starting welding occurs by focusing the laser means on a point of the copper body proximate to the joint between the surface of said copper body and the face of said plate.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 21, wherein said laser means comprise a solid-state laser.
- 6-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A contact element produced by a method for mutually welding a plate comprising at least one layer based on Ag alloys and a copper layer, and a copper body, using comprising the use of a laser means for performing said welding, said method comprising:

superimposing and coupling the copper layer of said plate on a surface of said copper body;

starting welding by focusing said laser means on a point located proximate to a joint between one face of said plate and said surface of said copper body;

maintaining an angle of incidence of said laser means at values other than 0° that are within a range from 5° to 20° with respect to the perpendicular to the surface to be welded; and

moving the laser means with respect to the joint so as to form such that an elongated weld is formed while an elongated weld, a component of the angle of incidence of said laser means is maintained-being kept oriented along the same direction as the relative motion between said laser means and said welded joint, said laser means being and such that said laser means is pointed towards a direction that is away from a opposite with respect to the portion of said joint that has already been welded, thereby forming an elongated weld having a weld pool that is pushed along said joint, joint to be welded; and

wherein the elongated weld comprises molten material of which at least 70% lies on a side of the elongated weld that is closer to said copper body.

maintaining a quantity of molten material of said weld, which lies on a side that belongs to said copper body with respect to said joint, within a range that is equal to or greater than 70%.

9. (Previously Presented) The contact element according to claim 8, wherein said copper body is the moving contact of a low-voltage contactor or circuit breaker.

10. (Previously Presented) The contact element according to claim 8, wherein said copper body is the fixed contact of a low-voltage contactor or circuit breaker.

11. (Previously presented) A low-voltage circuit breaker comprising one or more contact elements according to claim 9.

12. (Previously presented) A low-voltage contactor comprising one or more contact elements according to claim 9.
13. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein at least 70% of molten material formed by welding lies on a side of the joint that belongs to the copper body.
14. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein at least 70% of molten material formed by welding lies on a side of the joint that belongs to the copper body.
15. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein said laser means comprise a solid-state laser.
16. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein said laser means comprise a solid-state laser.
17. (Cancelled)
18. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein said plate comprises at least one copper layer.
19. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein said plate comprises at least one copper layer.
20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for mutually welding a plate comprising at least one layer based on Ag alloys and a copper layer, and a copper body, using comprising the use of a laser means for performing said welding, said method comprising:

superimposing and coupling the copper layer of said plate on a surface of said copper body;

starting welding by focusing said laser means on a point located proximate to a joint between one face of said plate and said surface of said copper body;

maintaining an angle of incidence of said laser means at values other than 0° that are within a range from 5° to 20° with respect to the perpendicular to said surface of said copper body; and

moving the laser means with respect to the joint so as to form such that an elongated weld is formed while an elongated weld, a component of the angle of incidence of said laser means is maintained being kept oriented along the same direction as the relative motion between said laser and said welded joint, said laser means being and such that said laser means is pointed towards a direction that is away from a opposite with respect to the portion of said joint that has already been welded, thereby forming an elongated weld having a weld pool that is pushed along said joint, joint to be welded; and

wherein the elongated weld comprises molten material of which at least 70% lies on a side of the elongated weld that is closer to said copper body.

maintaining a quantity of molten material of said weld, which lies on a side that belongs to said copper body with respect to said joint, within a range that is equal to or greater than 70%.